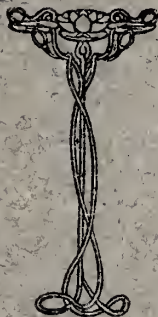


# The Story of My Life



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WILLIE ELIZABETH ROBIN



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STORY OF MY LIFE

BY

WILLIE ELIZABETH ROBIN

AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND  
15 WEST 16th STREET  
NEW YORK, NY 10011

### DEDICATION.

**T**O my mother, Mrs. Amanda P. Robin, who has cared for me from infancy and through all these days of my affliction and whose unfailing love has been the sunshine of my life this little book is affectionately dedicated.


WILLIE ELIZABETH ROBIN.



## PREFACE.

THIS little book is designed to tell the readers that there is no doubt that deaf-blind people can be taught and educated like sighted people. Please read it with great care as this is a true story composed of the writer's home-life, school-days and vacations in Texas and New England from childhood to womanhood.

Now as the writer has been requested to write this story she hopes it may be of a great benefit to each reader.



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## A BRIEF AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

I WAS the second of eight children, and was born on Hogg Creek, Throckmorton, Texas, on the twelfth day of July, 1884. Iza Orlenne Robin, who was the oldest, died before I knew her, so now I am the oldest, three sisters and three brothers making up the family. Their names are Bonnie, Isola, Robert, Albert, Lawrence and Helen. I was a large, healthy, good and mischievous child until at the age of eighteen months I was taken violently ill with spinal meningitis. No one understood the disease, so it raged and I barely lived through it, and after a few days had elapsed it was discovered that I had lost my hearing and sight, but the best of it was that I knew nothing of my suffering, and that my mind was not affected, and that I grew up to be a strong girl again. I could not walk well for nearly a year, and I was such a sad sight to behold that people wondered what would become of me; but my mother kept up her hopes for my recovery, and now they can hardly believe that I am the very same girl whom they knew a long time ago.

I was two years old when Bonnie was born in July, so both of us must have been a great deal of care for mamma, especially on account of my illness. One day we were crying for her when she wanted to help one of her nieces milk the cows, as my father had to be away sometimes when he raised sheep. Of course she could not take us with her very well, so she left us alone at the house for a few minutes. I received such a whipping that it nearly wore me out, but I soon learned to walk alone and be more independent. After I had learned my way around the house and yard I was on the move most of the time, and was as happy and lively as any child, and yet I could be quiet once in awhile.

I knew the difference between right and wrong by the whippings, slappings, stampings, and was obedient, but they were not numerous. One day mamma went out in the yard, and I thought I would play a trick on her, so I locked all the doors, and stood by the front one. When she came she kept knocking on it, but I would not unlock it, so Bonnie had to let her in at the back door. I got such a whipping that I cried hard, but it taught me a good lesson for I never dared to lock her out again.

We could not talk but understood each other by signs. Sometimes mamma would threaten to whip me and if I knew it in time I would run out and laugh as if I thought she could

not catch me. She was none too hard on me after all, so I loved her too well not to leave her at peace while she was at work. She did not always scold when she saw that I really did not mean to do wrong. Once I accidentally knocked a pail of water off its shelf, and another time I was running so fast that I broke a window when I jumped on its seat.

One day I was sitting on the doorstep putting stones in a bucket when Bonnie slammed the door on me. I no sooner opened it than she banged it on my thumb and even locked it. I must have cried for she had to let me in, but I did not complain much, if any, although my thumb was rather painful, as a piece of the skin was loose. I knew where the medicine and other things were kept, so I helped myself to them, and even dried dishes sometimes, and did what I could for my sisters.

My father used to poison or trap wolves, so he skinned some of them, and kept their hides under the bed. I was afraid of them, thinking they were alive, and yet I would run there just for curiosity, so mamma tried to break me of that habit when she got tired of it, but failed. So papa cured me by throwing a sheep skin at me. It scared me nearly to death, and because I was crying so much one of my parents ran at me on purpose to frighten me all the more.

One night mamma and I were standing by the fence watching papa milk the cows when one of them fought with her horns right in front of me as if she wanted to hook me. I tore my dress in getting away from the fence just as papa opened the gate, and as we ran to the house I imagined that I felt it bang and that we were being chased by that cow.

Another time some cows came near our house for shade, and I knew it by their odor, so I put several chairs around one of my sisters, and jumped on the bed where mamma was resting herself after a hard day's washing. My conscience did not feel good, so I laid her on the bed with us.

I was not afraid of dogs or cats or fowls, but I felt so strangely whenever a turkey or hen snatched my cookie out of my hand in such a mysterious way before I could catch it.

Snakes were unknown to me then, but I felt that there was danger just the same, and that this world was a vast place, so I did not venture to wander too far away from the house by myself for fear of losing my way. We would make a pen of chairs around one of the doors and lie down in it and if I felt the chairs moving I felt unsafe, thinking something was after us.

If I went anywhere mamma had to go too, because I could not trust myself to be with papa or any one else unless she was present. I can remember of riding horseback in her lap at the age of three or four years, while Aunt Belle had Bonnie. When it was time for us to start for home I would not wait for mother to get on the horse first, so she had to take me in her arms as large as I was, and do her very best in getting on the saddle. However, I allowed auntie to take me down when I realized that we were at home.

One day as we were crossing a creek, or something of that kind, mamma was sitting on the back seat while we children were on the floor of the hack, and she fell backwards with Isola and an umbrella in her arms. Of course I looked around for her and when she came back to us in a few minutes she did not appear as if she had been hurt badly.

It was seldom that I cried for anything in church, but once I was sitting near a little girl and because she would not let me touch her I pricked her with a pin and caused her to cry and her mother to laugh at us. Mamma took me out and gave me such a good shaking that I understood what might happen if I misbehaved myself again. My father used to keep time with the singing, so I imitated him and I wonder what people thought of us.

Now the time came when two Boston friends of ours told my parents of a deaf-blind girl named Helen Keller, and of course they wished me to be educated, too, so they wrote to the school in Austin, Texas. Because they received an answer that nobody in the United States could teach any one in my condition they wrote to Mr. Anagnos at Perkins Institution for the Blind, South Boston, Massachusetts. He willingly consented to admit me into his school under condition that my parents should pay what they could for my education and board. He and the State very kindly paid the rest and Texas sent something later.

So in December when I was six years old mamma and I started for Boston, leaving Bonnie and Isola with grandpa and his children. I did not know where I was going, although I wondered at everything, but did not worry much as long as mother was with me. Traveling on the cars for several days was quite pleasant for me as it was so new and strange.

We arrived in Boston at night, and in the morning we went to South Boston where we saw Mr. Anagnos, Miss Sullivan and Helen Keller. As we were going up stairs he recognized me from my photograph, and said in a friendly way that if he had known of our arrival he would have met us at the

station. I was left in his charge and I feel that he and other friends saw that everything was done for my good. He was very fond of children and would often play with them and talk to them.

In the afternoon Mr. Reardon went with us to the kindergarten in Jamaica Plain, where we met Misses Greeley, Vose, Johnson, Roeske and Mrs. Davidson. Most of the children were at home for the Christmas vacation, but I soon felt at home with those that remained and we began to play together.

I was in the midst of my merriment when Miss Thayer, my first special teacher, arrived an hour after I did and wished to see me, so mamma had to bring me to the parlor by force. When I discovered that the former was nothing but a grown up lady I impolitely jumped away from her, and kept bumping my head under the table until the latter had to whip me right in front of the ladies. They looked on in surprise and disapproval, but soon saw what good it did for unruly children when they needed it, and I think my teacher is the only one who followed mother's example.

Why, Misses Thayer, Johnson and Roeske together could not compel me to get into the bath tub, and because mamma heard me screaming she came and gave me such a whipping that I knew what obedience was. I had never been in such a large tub at home and was so afraid of water that I would not stay long in a rowboat, and when I went in bathing in the ocean with Miss Thayer it scared me at first, but now I am no coward about it.

The children liked for mamma to play with them, and I was only too glad to share my happiness with her. One day as I was sitting in the hall with my feet thrust out and hanging between the openings of the banister she came and spelled the word "cat" in my hand. I had not learned a single thing then, and it felt so strangely that I have never forgotten it. She could leave me with my playmates without missing her when she went out with any of the ladies, but when her week's visit expired she did not let me see her with her wraps on for fear I might have cried to go home with her, too. After awhile when I noticed that she was not there I managed to ask Miss Thayer where she was. She took me to the front door, and I understood by her signs that mother had gone home, but strange to say I do not remember of crying for her then. I thought of her and the rest of the family many times as I was not a good sleeper at nights, and I wondered what they were doing, but did not have a great desire to be with them.

Now that I was left to be educated the first thing I did was to learn the alphabet and spelling with my fingers as a large baby does with its mouth for a little knowledge of the language before going any further. Certain objects were shown to me and the words were spelled in my hand; then I repeated them. I think I remember of spelling "fan" although "ring" was the first work that I learned. Later on I was able to put words into short sentences, and therefore could carry on simple conversations with people.

Now the next step was taken in articulation lessons. Mr. Anagnos did not want me to have them at first, but Miss Thayer did not see why not, so she went out for them herself in order that she might give them to me in the proper way. When he saw how well I had started in them he was much pleased and allowed me to continue with them. I usually did my best but was not especially interested in reading lips, so never made much progress in it because people do not talk alike, and anyway it is not the proper thing for daily use. They regret that I did not keep up with those lessons all the time during my fifteen and a half years at school because I do not talk distinctly or softly enough to suit them, but they did not always make arrangements for them in later years as I had to work extra in my studies most of the time, and occasionally wanted a free hour to myself for a change. It does not take long for strangers to understand me after they become a little accustomed to my pronunciation. Helen Keller is wonderful while I am only an ordinary person, but I was taught and brought up to be as much like other people as possible and that pleases me.

In the kindergarten room I wove mats, sewed on cards, worked with forms, making figures on cushions, made things with blocks or from clay, strung beads, and had many other kinds of work. That kind of work is a good preparation for small children for it develops their minds and trains them to use both hands equally well.

Miss Thayer says that I learned things rapidly, but I fear I have always been rather slow and stupid all my life; for I had many more struggles than I could bear. She was so strict that I was a little afraid of her, and for that reason I had to put my mind on my work. She was very particular that I should do it well, have good manners, be thoughtful and careful of everything, etc., and if I neglected to do my best she was ready to send me to bed or make me sit alone in a room without speaking to the girls. Sometimes she simply threatened to punish me to scare me, and then I had to behave myself for



I hated punishments with all my heart. I was so unmanageable that she had to give me a number of whippings, but I am glad to say that the last one was when I was eight years of age. She was not very strong, and it is a wonder how she got the best of such a wild girl as I was whenever I would try to escape those whippings. One time she was having me build something with blocks when I got so angry that I would have fallen backwards in my chair if she had not caught me in time.

In spite of my roughness I was allowed to mingle with the best girls when I was not naughty and they were not in class and as a rule we got along very well. It was only once in a while that we quarreled at all or told tales on one another. Miss Thayer did many kind things for me and let me have some good times, but it was because I had so much to learn that I felt she was disciplining me too much. I am sure she did not mean to be unjust, but she did not always know of my doings, and I could not explain to her that I was innocent until I knew more language.

For instance, she compelled me to stay in my room as a punishment because she was told that I had broken a chain belonging to one of the girls, and I did not know how to tell her that another girl slapped my hand so hard that my fingers got caught in the chain while I was looking at it or something of that kind.

Another time nobody noticed that I spelled "Please excuse me" with my fingers when I wished to leave the table, so Miss Thayer had to bring me back to repeat it. It did not annoy me then because she did not scold me.

When I had been at the kindergarten two years the girls had the pleasure of moving into a new building with Mrs. Hill and Miss Loring for matrons. As Misses Johnson and Thayer and all my schoolmates were with me I felt at home at once, and was so proud of the new building that I never longed to go back to the old one. I was very sorry not to spend the first night with the others, but for some reasons Miss Thayer took me back to spend it in the other building.

When I was seven years of age I began to learn to read line type with my fingers. As this was easy for me I must have had a good sense of touch, but I hardly ever read with my class for about a year. One day while I was reading in Miss Thayer's room she asked me to show her all the words which were familiar to me. She must have been curling her hair at the time for when she saw I was not paying attention to my lesson she touched my finger with a hot iron, and then I knew better than to waste time. There was a time when I could not

seem to understand the meaning of the word "cold" so Miss Thayer took me out of doors, and as we ran she declared that it was cold. I was afraid or did not want to run, so I scratched her hand and she scolded me a little; then forgave me. The wind was blowing hard, and I imagined we were running from or chasing a beast as I knew that horses came into the yard, and I was afraid of them. Sometimes when we girls went out for a few minutes we would run back into the house as if something was coming after us, and Miss Thayer would say it was cold, but still I could not catch on to the point till I had heard it many times.

"Hark" is another word that was not clear to me for a while. Miss Thayer and I were in the front parlor when she rushed me into the back one and closed the folding doors, telling me to hark. I knew that she meant for me to be quiet, so I obeyed her, thinking there was danger of some kind. A clean apron was brought to me, and then we went back into the front parlor where a caller was waiting to see us. I still felt haunted by what had happened, and later when I asked Miss Thayer about it she replied that she was not dressed for company.

One day at the age of eight I was reading with my class when I came across the name of God, and of course I inquired its meaning. Miss Thayer hardly knew what to do, but explained it as well as she could although Mr. Anagnos wished to prove whether or not I could find out myself that there was such a spirit before I was old enough to understand the subject. She told me not to talk about it to any one, but I could not be silent all the time when I wanted to know more of this world, and not all of my questions could be answered till I was in my teens. I was not allowed to have the Bible stories until I was eleven, and even then I could not understand some of them as part of the language was beyond my knowledge for many years. The story of Christ was read to me when I was nine and it seems that I could have repeated or written it down then.

One night Miss Thayer caught me getting a drink of water long after I had been in bed, and scolded me by asking me what God would say. She evidently was afraid of my catching cold or thought I ought to have drunk before going to bed and fallen asleep, but as a rule I was a restless child.

The next thing was pencil-writing, making the letters square with grooved boards between the sheets of paper to guide us, but I required so much practice that I did not know all the capitals or small letters for one or two years. We



wrote stories about what we imagined or heard or what happened to us or what we studied about in zoology, and sometimes our letters also. The teachers were so ashamed of me for just saying at one time, "The sea-amonias are small animals and have small bodies." I either did not pay attention to my zoology lesson or hardly knew what to write down as it was new to me then, but I did better afterwards. It pleased me immensely whenever they said my writing was good, and then again they would provoke me by saying that some of the girls could do it better than I after all the pains I had taken to do my best. Their praising me must have been making me vain, so they made remarks on purpose to make me improve my work although I fear they were not always true ones from what I heard later on. So it is possible for blind people to do as well or better than some of the sighted ones who are poor writers or have peculiar ways of writing that cannot be read easily by everybody.

Among other things that I learned were sewing and knitting. The latter was rather hard work at first, but soon it was mastered, and I became industrious for a while, then went back into mischief as most lively children do when they get a chance because they think there is nothing better than a good time.

### MEETING NEW FRIENDS.

I had been at Jamaica Plain but one year when I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Whiting, my future guardian, at a doll show and again at the kindergarten with his wife. They brought me a nice doll which I admired so much that I took care of it for nearly two years without dropping it to pieces. I was so happy that I did not realize what I was doing. We went to my room, and I put my precious doll in its carriage in place of the old one; then as we were going back to the parlor I almost pulled Mrs. Whiting down stairs in the midst of my excitement. She and other kind friends kept me well supplied with toys, some of which I gave away after a while and others which were in pretty good condition at my graduation.

Miss Bull and little Tommy Stringer, her new deaf-blind pupil, and I spent our very first summer with the Thayer family in Williamsburg, Massachusetts, and I was there again at different times on short visits. I boarded with the two Misses Poulsson in Boston during the next two summers, and while I was with them we spent some time with the Newton family in Fayville, Massachusetts, with Miss Johnson at Clark Island,

near Plymouth, Massachusetts, and with Mrs. Whiting at Hingham, Massachusetts. Sometimes I was allowed to be alone with the latter, and of course then I felt very important even though I was told by Miss Annie Poulsson to be a good little girl. Mr. and Mrs. Whiting lived in Hingham during warm weather and in Boston during the winter, so it was convenient for my teacher and me to be with them frequently.

Mrs. Whiting must have been fond of children for she would humor me in vacations, so as a rule we got along well together, although she sometimes corrected me. There was much amusement in the house and out of doors and we were on the go a great deal, and I had sighted children to play with me.

It was not all play during vacations for I liked to do what little house work and fancy work I could, besides primping, writing letters, stringing beads and painting. I read sometimes but it did not mean half as much then as now, because I did not know enough of the language to enjoy the stories.

At school I was not as happy all the time as elsewhere on account of the work, rules and discipline. Scoldings do not always irritate me if they are given in the proper way by people I love and if I can see that I am to blame.

When I saw what delightful people Mr. and Mrs. Whiting were and what good times I had with them I did not want to be with any one else as I had been taught to consider them as my parents. They never had any children but were fond of them, so they adopted a daughter who died of consumption before I ever knew them. I am afraid they were spoiling me because it led me to wanting to live with them. At the age of nine when I saw that summer was drawing near I wrote to them, asking them if I could spend the vacation with them, and I do not understand why my letter was sent to them after having been read by the school people, when they knew better than to impose on any one. I had to be somewhere anyway, as I was not near my home, and they probably thought of boarding me with them. Mr. Whiting went to see Mr. Anagnos about the matter and told him that he would not charge me anything for my board, so I lived with him as his daughter until I was twenty years of age, when his wife died of nervous and heart trouble. Misses Greeley, Thayer and I had already been to Concord, New Hampshire, during the previous fall to see some friends, so I received an invitation to spend a while among the White Mountains, but I declined it, saying I was going to Hingham for the first summer.

Some of the girls went home every Saturday for over Sunday, so I wanted to follow their example and go to see Mrs. Whiting, but Mr. Anagnos put a stop to it as I was not doing well in my lessons, although I meant to do my best. He allowed me to go there only every other week, and that provoked me as the time seemed so long to me then, but now I think the vacations would have been enough for me if I had only been more considerate. When I was ten years of age I had to spend part of the Easter vacation at the kindergarten, and it is a wonder I did not fuss too much over it, although it displeased me. Nobody would tell me why those arrangements were made then, but afterwards I heard that it was because I was getting vain, selfish, thoughtless, wilful, etc., and having too many and better times than some of the girls did, especially those that came from poor or far-away homes or those who were cared for by the State and had to remain at school until summer appeared. Our day's work did not commence until about nine o'clock in the morning, so I would not return to Jamaica Plain until Monday. I did not always do well in my classes on that day, so Miss Johnson warned me that I should have to return on Sunday nights if my Monday lessons were not better. As I did not like milk and crackers without sugar in them for Sunday supper and wished to be with Mrs. Whiting as much as possible I worked hard on Mondays so that I might stay away until then.

Mrs. Whiting did not believe in disciplining any one, and did not think that many good times did me any harm. So we got along well together. When I was naughty she would simply show me by her actions that she was hurt or leave me alone or ask me who this girl was or correct me in a nice way or say she would take me to Mr. Anagnos, etc., so I had to mind her as well as I could, sometimes against my will for her sake, because I could not think of giving her up.

I was often more willing to share my toys with the children than my goodies, so I must have been very greedy for pleasure and everything else, but as I advanced in years I outgrew my selfishness, and did not expect so much of people but more than I do now. My guardians paid much attention to me and were ready to do anything for me, but would not let me do so much for them, so I fear they spoiled me. They came from nice, poor families, so they taught me to consider some of their expense as I grew older, although they were comfortably well off. They gave me more things than I ever dreamed of or cared for and yet I accepted them, although I was rather hard to please at times when a child. Sad to say I did ask or spent

my money for unnecessary things sometimes, and it was not often that they complained except that I must be a little more saving.

They were not as proud as many wealthy people are when I remember how I helped Mrs. Whiting and her nice maids with housework, stayed in the kitchen for a chat or went out with them. One of them used to take me back to school on Sunday nights in later years, on account of Mr. Whiting's bad health. We all were very friendly, but at times they felt that I was a little too particular about cleaning up while Mrs. Whiting was well pleased and so glad that I could take good care of my things.

My guardians were very thoughtful, and it pleased me whenever they invited Mr. Anagnos, some matron or teacher or pupil to visit or call on us, and for me to be with any of them at their homes. As I grew older I would sometimes plan the entertainment for them at Mrs. Whiting's home and school, although the teachers often suggested what I could do to give people a good time. It was pleasanter for me to be with them than to be alone, but I do not know why I did not get up courage to ask Mrs. Whiting's permission to let me bring them home with us oftener than I did nor to sacrifice anything as much as I might have done.

When I was a member of the Howe Reading Club and on committee with Miss Bardin and Nellie Kennedy I felt at a loss as to what we should do until I thought of Nantasket Beach, where I had gone frequently, and that Mr. Whiting was one of the directors of the boats and that he might give us free tickets. It was well that he had just recovered from his illness at that time for he and his wife and nurse were able to join us and make our party all the merrier. We had plenty of our own lunch, and yet he kindly treated us to more refreshments at the beach hotel. The only thing we regretted was that Mr. Anagnos was unable to be with us. I was so happy that I did not realize what I was doing. When one of the teachers remarked that our entertainment was the best one she had enjoyed during that year I declared that it was so and was warned of self-praise. I was considered greedy for pleasure, but there are some people who do not care to share it with any one, nor have company as I did. In fact, I think I enjoyed the entertainment called "The District School" and parties, dances and outings as well as our Nantasket picnic, although some of the quiet entertainments were rather dull once in a while.



## SOME INTERESTING PLACES VISITED.

Some of the interesting places which I have visited are Plymouth, where the pilgrims landed in 1620; Concord, where Miss Louise Alcott wrote "Little Women" and other books; up the steep flight of stairs to the top of Bunker Hill, both latter places of which are famous for the beginning of the revolutionary war in 1775; Cambridge, where Harvard College was founded in 1636, where George Washington stood under a tree, and where Longfellow, one of the famous poets, lived; Castle Island, where Mr. Whiting lived and had to row to Marine Park, South Boston, when he went to school, as the bridge had not been built then; the White Mountains in New Hampshire; New York, where the Thayer family lived part of the time, and Gardner, Maine, where Mrs. Richards held a fair, I think, to raise money for the kindergarten or something else. Her father, Dr. Howe, was superintendent of Perkins Institution when Mr. Anagnos came to this country from Greece.

I used to take part in the plays at South Boston on Washington's birthday, so I had chances of seeing a few of my schoolmates who went there before I did. It is interesting to know that the school stands on the very hills where some of the army probably fought and drove the English soldiers from Boston. I can hardly believe it when I think that the place was a wilderness at that time, and now it is rather crowded but healthful as it is surrounded by the ocean.

When I was eighteen years of age Mr. Whiting had a long and severe illness and had only barely recovered from it when our picnic took place at Nantasket Beach. I was with him just the same during the Easter vacation while he was confined to his bed. Some of the school people were more considerate than I was, and when they suggested that I stay at Perkins Institution during the holidays Mrs. Whiting said she did not want me to be there, so I gladly remained with her and had a pleasant time.

When the next winter came I was taken with measles a few days before the Christmas vacation began, and Mrs. Whiting would not hear of my going to the hospital, so I was brought to her house in an ambulance. How little we dreamed that it was our last Christmas together, as she was ill during the next year and died of nervous and heart trouble, but the Easter and summer holidays did not upset our plans very much. She seemed as well as usual in May when my room-

mate and I stayed over Sunday with her. I was tired out then, and it worried her because she thought I had been working too hard, but I did not think much of it until a few days later when both of us had the grippe. It went much harder with her than with me and caused her to break down in health, but at times during the summer and fall she was doing pretty well. I am told she liked to listen to me and watch me do some fancy work, but I did not want to be a nuisance to her, so sometimes I stayed with her company or nurse or maids or by myself until she sent for me. Now she told me that my Saturdays might be irregular and so they were; for I was with her only once besides Thanksgiving Day, which was her last time at table with us, although we had hopes of her recovery then. She said that I had been in a sick house too long, and when she asked what I would do if I could not be with her next summer, I replied that I had received invitations from some friends. She then told me that Mr. Whiting said for her not to have the care of my things as she used to, and that he was going to see my matron about the matter. I realized that everything was costing him a great deal of money, so I offered to give up some of my pleasure by not going away from the Institution, but she did not agree with me, so I did not try very hard to be saving. I heard at school that he said I had been very disagreeable after all I had done to help them, kept out of the way and not begged too much for everything I wanted, but I should not have made so many complaints or objections or arguments, etc.

My guardians felt badly to tell me that I could not be with them for Christmas, and I was disappointed too, but had to make the best of it, and had a busy and pleasant time after all. One of the girls wanted me to go home with her, but I could not as she could not see at all and lived too far away. I felt badly about it but did not fuss much over it. I wrote to some of my friends asking them to call on me hoping they would invite me to spend the holidays with them, but would not say so. The school people were provoked when they read my letters from those friends saying they could not come to see me. It looked as if I had been imposing on them, so it would have been better if I had made special arrangements for them to spend a day or so with me or gone to see them myself or nothing at all.

Mrs. Whiting was up every time I saw her except the last time when she sent for me just a few days before she died. She never mentioned a word of leaving us, and I did not let her know that I realized it either. Her death occurred in

January and she knew that my graduation was to take place in a year from that following June, so she had Mr. Whiting promise her that he would look after me just the same until I was ready to come home. He certainly did keep his word, and I feel indebted to both of them for their kindness as long as they lived. Her passing away cast a very deep shadow over him for the remainder of his life, and it is a blessing he did not live to complete his fifth year of separation.

I do not know what I would have done if it had not been for Mr. Whiting when I realized how much influence he had over his friends and how much they did for us in every way. It was possible for him to get passes for me and a companion to come home when I was four, eight, fourteen and eighteen years of age, but not after my graduation four years later for the railroad regulations made it impossible at that time. My parents wanted to see me during my stay at school, and Mr. Anagnos thought best for me to make home visits while I was young for fear I might forget my family, so Miss Thayer and I had an extra vacation from October to December and stopped at Williamsburg for Christmas on the way back to Boston. I had not learned very many words then but enough so that I knew where I was going and who I was going to see. It provoked me if any teacher would say that Tommy Stringer or one of the girls would go in my place if I did not do my lessons well, and I was too ignorant to know that my parents would not receive any one without me.

Our trip was rather a long one as there had been floods on the road, and we lost one of the trains at one place, but I do not mind traveling much. When we reached our last station we went on the mail hack as far as the river where my father met us. The bridge was under water, so we crossed the river on horseback with the cowboys, and rode home in the buggy. I recognized the whole family and was glad to see them all, and everything seemed natural when I was alone with them although they had moved to town from the country.

My mother was not well then, and had to hire some one to help her with the work. She wanted me to be turned loose and be merry, but Miss Thayer would not allow me to play with the children all the time because all of us were rather wild. The latter would join us part of the time, and then make a prisoner of me by keeping me in our room for a while. I brought my toys with me, so I had enough amusement during my captivity. Mamma would stay with us when she could, and some one was coming all the time; then we were on the go, so I was not enslaved too much after all, but



I was happier every time Miss Thayer was absent. She was always scolding and correcting me, so I had to think of my behavior and manners for fear mamma might tell her tales of me. Some of my old playmates came and I had not forgotten them, and they are still in my memory now, although they moved away before I came home for the third time.

One day as we were coming back from our old country home I was silent, then declared that I did not want to return to the kindergarten, and when Miss Thayer asked me what she should say to Miss Greeley I replied, "Say how do you do." But for a wonder I did want to go when the time came for us to think of it, and it seemed so good to be alone with the blind children again. Miss Thayer tried to enjoy herself and speaks well of our visit but she was so homesick for the North.

### MY RETURN TO BOSTON.

My mother came for me three times and even brought me back to Boston. It was not convenient for me to miss school as I grew older, so I had to endure the summer heat as well as I could. It made me sick every time, but I did not think much of it until I was taken with typhoid fever after my graduation. The family had enlarged whenever I came home except the first time, so I learned to amuse and take care of them and other children, no matter how little they were. Of course, the small ones are darlings while the older ones are mischievous, lively, noisy and full of pranks, but they can behave well when they want to. Everything seemed strange, unnatural and changed during my second visit because we had been separated for nearly six years. Of course, we had grown older and knew more of education then, but we soon got used to one another, and I did not want to leave them again. When I was little I was not inclined to write often to them, but in later years we became pretty good correspondents, and I craved letters from them.

Albert Whiting Robin was two years old then when I was fourteen, and I thought the world of him, so I teased mother to bring him to Boston with us to show him off to everybody. I am sorry to think of it because he cried to go home nearly all the time, and both of us must have been a nuisance to her and other people as well as a great deal of care. I wanted to surprise Mr. and Mrs. Whiting, so I did not tell them what was going to happen, and when they saw my little brother why, they were so astonished that mamma regret-

ted she ever brought him. They had such queer expressions on their faces that she never wanted to bring another child with her again and have her hands full. I knew that they liked little children, and had them stay with them sometimes, but somehow they did not want Albert, so mamma would not stay until school opened, although we did visit it and saw a few people at the kindergarten and South Boston. I do not know how they felt, but I think Mr. Anagnos rather liked him. It has always been my wish that my folks lived near me in the North, because it is pleasanter there than in the South, and I longed to be with them frequently, and now I miss my friends greatly, but we have to make the best of everything that comes to us.

When I was nine years old our Christmas vacation was longer than usual on account of scarlet fever at the kindergarten, so I spent part of it with my guardians and the rest of it in Williamsburg. When I was on the train Miss Thayer told me that she was to be married to Mr. Hadley, and that I was to have a new teacher by the name of Miss Smith. This made me very sad, and I realized for the first time that Miss Thayer had been a good teacher and mother to me, and that I loved her after all, in spite of her severeness. The idea of losing her and having a stranger in her place made me cry, and as usual she reminded me of my selfishness. I soon became reconciled to the change because I knew Mr. Hadley well as I had seen and gone with him many times and liked him very much.

The wedding which took place at the Thayer house was rather a quiet one, and I had no objection to it then because they still cared as much for me as ever, and we made plans for me to visit them. They seem to be happily married, and that pleases me.

I remember the day when Miss Smith first came to my class. I knew there was a visitor behind me and inquired about her, and Miss Thayer told me her name. Later I found her to be very pleasant and lady-like, but she was not with me much out of school, and when I was in class she did not always make me work as hard as I should have done. She remained with me two and a half years only, and I never came to know her perfectly, so I was not as much attached to her as to my other teachers, and have seen but little of her since she left me.

My arithmetic lessons in the primary room were rather new to me just before Miss Thayer married and, strange to say, I did not get along as well with her as with Miss Smith, but

I suppose it is because I was better started in them at last. I must have dreaded them so much that one day as we girls were marching into the room I unconsciously made a face, and received a scolding for it from Miss Thayer. It was not always easy for me to explain how things happened on account of my ignorance, so I would simply say that I did not mean to do them. There were other things that she and other people accused me of when I was guiltless of them, but I did not always know enough to deny them, nor give reasons for them until I was older.

I do not know what was ailing me one time in arithmetic class unless it was because I was so stupid or stubborn that Miss Thayer compelled me to sit down with the little children in the kindergarten room, but I would not stay there, so she had to take me away, and Miss Johnson was ashamed of my misconduct. It is true I did well in all my classes and was so eager to do my best when I wanted to, but at the same time I felt so relieved, happy and vain to think I was such a good little girl that I had to be scolded or punished once in a while if I neglected to do any better or consider my behavior. It was very silly of me to see how fast I could say the tables or do examples in my head or on the type slate just to see what Miss McGee would say, and Miss Smith would answer my question that the teacher simply smiled at me, but I think I had discontinued that habit before we had Miss Lane, not caring so much for flattery. She and Miss McGee were very good friends of mine, and I had very little trouble with them, but that does not mean that they would ever think of spoiling me in their classes, although they were very easy on me. I was so afraid of disgracing myself too much or losing my pleasure that I put my mind on my doings, sometimes at a warning.

We had only enough geography to get an idea of what the earth was like. We examined the globe, maps, and I am not positive but think we were read to. The study was as interesting as zoology, because we were not obliged to listen attentively all the time, but allowed to talk a little, especially about the subjects.

That reminds me of the time when I went for a sail with Mr. and Mrs. Whiting, and I think it was at East Boston that I walked on a dead whale to see how long it was. I was not too fussy to feel of clams, lobsters, oysters, birds, rats, mice, alligators, fishes, etc., some of which were alive, others stuffed and more that were cut to pieces, but I despised the odor of certain ones. One day we were making oyster shells from

clay, and I did not think I could model them well, but I fear I was too wilful to try, so I was sent to bed for the rest of the day without speaking to the girls.

I was not afraid of Miss Smith, and therefore was so bold as to disobey her sometimes, even outside of school, and some one would tell her tales of me unless she found me out herself. I fear we played a little bit in class once in a while, especially in reading as we had it to ourselves for articulation, and she would say that Miss Johnson might catch us.

Now the time came when I learned that my kindergarten days were over for good, and that I was going to South Boston. As I did not feel at all acquainted there I felt very sorry to think of leaving Jamaica Plain for the other school for older girls. But sad to say, I had to say "good-bye" to it at the age of twelve, and in the fall Miss Badger became my teacher. She made us two visits at the kindergarten, and I hardly knew what to say when Miss Smith asked me how I would like her for a new teacher, but it seems that I thought she was pleasant because she praised me for taking such good care of my toys. She spent several days with Mrs. Whiting at Hingham during the summer, but still I could not get well acquainted with her for some time afterwards. However, we became great friends and I am so glad she was the very last teacher I had. I owe her and my regular teachers more than I can express in words for going through my countless struggles during my ten years at South Boston. Some of them were strict, while others were amiable, but all of them were very kind, helpful, thoughtful, friendly, etc., when everything went off peacefully with us. They believed in disciplining the pupils, but they could be lively and girlish when they chose to at the right time, and we certainly did have much pleasure together, so I can see a good character in them, even if we felt bitterly toward one another once in a while. We girls felt at times that they and our matrons had little sympathy for us, because we did not realize then that they were trying to make good women of us, nor that we ourselves might have enough experience with children in the future. We had so many disappointments, much trouble, and were longing to be at home, but that was when we were in low spirits, and not always trying to do right, nor making the best of everything that came our way.

It happened that the South Boston School had been enlarged and a new cottage built when I went there. What delighted me was that six kindergartners went there with me, some of whom were my devoted friends, but what disap-



pointed me greatly was that they went into Elliot cottage, the new one, while I went into Fisher cottage, an old one, among strangers. But I am glad of it because friendship soon arose between us all over the place, no matter where we happened to be, out-of-doors or in the school building or houses. Times went very hard with the girls in Elliot cottage when their second matron came, so that made up for my disappointment as I had so much school trouble to endure, but I was sorry for them and glad when their matron came to relieve them of their burdens. Mrs. Knowlton was my matron, Miss Bennett, her sister, was our principal, and we respected both of them. More kindergartners came each year, some of whom came into Fisher cottage, so that lessened my longing for Jamaica Plain as I saw that I was growing up.

We were quite comfortable at South Boston because of friendship, pleasure and society, but we were rather crowded in the little yard and had too many stairs to run over each day; then, too, some of the buildings were needing repairing at times, so I am glad a new institution has been built at Watertown and I trust it is as homelike as the old one. I always liked the kindergarten better on account of its large playgrounds, and the buildings are more modern, roomy and convenient in every way.

Of course our arithmetic work at Jamaica Plain was very simple, so I was able to keep up with some of the brightest girls without much help or having an extra hour for it. I think I understood that we were ahead of others, so we were put into the sixth class at South Boston where we remained for two years, one in the fifth and one in the fourth. Then the grading of the school was changed so that it would correspond with the grading of the public schools of the State, and I was placed in the eighth grade. I stayed in that and each succeeding grade for one year, and graduated from a four years' course in the high school.

There were about twelve of us in the class at first, but only Ida Cross, Nellie Smith and I graduated together, and I was the only one that came from Jamaica Plain, the other two having entered school at a time beyond the kindergarten age. I do not understand how I ever pulled myself through all my struggles without a break and then graduated on the fifth of June, 1906, about five weeks before I was twenty-two years old, but I did accomplish this with the help of my teachers for I was very slow, incapable and dependent. How much happier I would have been if I had liked studying as well as Helen Keller does, but I have very little taste for it.

I think she has a sweet disposition and a good teacher so that no one can help wishing to befriend or do things for them.

Of course most of my schoolmates could hear, so I knew what was going on, and those who could see a little bit were a great help and comfort to us all in every way, but the few that I shall tell about now are deaf-blind, although some of them have gone on before. Edith Thomas was one of my best friends, although she was older than I and much quieter in manner, and I always loved her on account of her condition as well as for her good character. She was none too sedate for me, her sorrows and joys were mine as much as mine were hers. Sad to say she was obliged to leave Perkins Institution in 1903 when I was ready for the second year of high school, and in 1909 she passed away peacefully. I do not know that I was a better student than she, although it was a little easier for me to keep up with my class than for her, and I was in better health than she was. The people suspended her for one year, thinking she did not try to do her best in her studies, but soon they saw that her physical condition had much to do with her unsatisfactory work. Had she been less reticent it would have been easier for those who cared for her to know how to judge her. Why, she was nine years old when she went to the kindergarten which was new then, and I fear she was not well taught nor disciplined at first from what I have heard, so things went hard with her. Had she remained and done well she might have graduated the year before I did, after having been to school about nineteen years, if I am not mistaken.

Her death was the best release as she was not always happy at the Hospital in Monson, Massachusetts, where it was necessary for her to go that she might have proper medical attention at the State's expense.

Rachel Lawton was only in her teens when she died suddenly at the same time that Edith left school. The former was as dear to me as the latter, although we had only a few months to get acquainted in. Rachel was so intelligent, considerate, lively, friendly and sociable that no one could help loving her. As she was only partially deaf-blind and a day pupil she had no special teacher, but Miss Burnham, one of the regular teachers had her in her classes and helped her with her work, and did what she could for her outside of school. Rachel's sight was weakening, so she left the Horace-mann School in Boston where deaf pupils attended daily.

Nellie Winitzkey who was in her teens was at Perkins Institution only during my last year there, so we did not know each other very well as she had so much to learn. She had already been to the public school in Springfield, Massachusetts, and to the Clarke School at Northampton, and seemed amiable but she was very frail. She gained for a while, but was not strong enough to complete the course, so she went home in 1912, just before the new institution at Watertown was ready for use or at least part of it as the rest of it was not done then.

Cora Crocker and Marion Rostron were not young enough when they went to South Boston, and therefore, were very hard to manage, although they had been to school in their early days. They did not like studying any better than I did, so they discontinued it. Small children can be controlled easier than the older ones, so it is well I commenced at an early age, and did not remain longer than fifteen and a half years.

### MY FIRST YEAR IN SOUTH BOSTON.

What a time I did have in reading during my first year at South Boston, and no wonder at that when I have repeated how little I knew of the language. What a difference there was between "Grandfather's Chair" there and "What Katy Did" at Jamaica Plain. Miss Smith told me to ask her the meanings of the words that I did not know, but I did not always obey her when I did not care to learn their definitions, so I just went on. Now because "Grandfather's Chair" was too hard and dry for me I was obliged to drop into the seventh reading class and give up articulation lessons but I was with my own class just the same in other studies. The best thing is that I could tell stories that interested me, but it has never been very easy for me to remember the meaning of so many big words at one time, nor memorize poems or hymns, although the expressions were not always hard for me. My memory was so short that I often forgot what I had learned. "The Land of the Pyramids" was another hard book that I read with my own class and did not like as well as other books, but I have no doubt that I should like it now and "Grandfather's Chair" which I finished when I left the seventh class. Nothing gives me more pleasure at present than reading a great deal, although I grew to like it during my teens, both in class and outside when I felt ambitious or had the time for it. It was such slow work for me that I often needed an extra hour for the purpose of keeping up with the smart girls, one



every day when we had "Evangeline" and "The Courtship of Miles Standish." They were narrative poems and so interesting that I had no objection to studying them, but it seems that "The Lady of the Lake" was easier for me.

We had many examinations to see how well we remembered our vocabulary and expressions, and most of mine were a little more than zero, so after they were over I had to look up the words in the dictionary to be ready to put them into sentences. I wrote their definitions down and memorized them, but once I had a foolish notion to look at them in class, so I received two marks for dishonesty and one for falsehood because I said I had no special reason for looking at them when I knew them well. What I said was true, but not as clear as it might have been. It was as if I had been caught in a trap, and I did not know why I wanted to look at them for nothing, nor what to say either, but I do own that I was dishonest. At that time I was not aware of what would happen, and it mattered not to me when the teacher took my papers from me for I did not need them and never missed them either. I think we were defining more new words then, some of which I had forgotten as I had not looked them up in the dictionary. I did know we were having examinations and were not to be helped in any way until they were over, and I only happened to be positive of all the words that I had already looked up in the dictionary, but I might have made a mistake another time if I had not learned a lesson. So I was shut up from two to six o'clock on a Saturday afternoon for the first and last time when I was fifteen years of age, and how miserable I did feel, but it probably would not have happened if I had only realized beforehand what dishonesty was and shunned it.

English Grammar was also a nuisance to me when I first went to South Boston, so I had no end of trouble. It must have been my fault for not doing my best all the time, but I disliked it so much that I could not appreciate its good then. Once I was sent out of the room for getting the definition of a verb mixed up with that of a noun.

Another day I had such a poor lesson that I had to stay at home with Miss Bennett while the Fisher cottage family went to Marine Park on a picnic. Miss Badger left my supper in my room besides some sentences for me to analyze, such as "The gallery is long," etc., but I would not study them because grammar and the picnic together were more than I could bear, and I was not scolded for it. So she wrote them

for nothing unless I analyzed them to her in the morning, and I feel sure I can do so this instant.

I was nearly thirteen then, and to think what a big girl I was to be a coward, but I felt so scared or silly that I would actually run out of my room into the hall until Miss Bennett came to me. She must have been so amazed that she could not make out what it all meant, but finally she collected her thoughts and remarked that she was not coming till she heard the noise. When I was small I sometimes was afraid to stay in my room while the girls were in singing class. That is the same way with sighted children who are afraid of darkness, but I do not know what was ailing me unless something was haunting me most of the time.

During the next fall I received my first two marks for wasting time and impatience in grammar class, and in spite of my misery I did better work for a while. I felt very much disgraced because everybody would know it and the teachers would be so ashamed of me, and I hardly knew how to act at all, but they were the same as before. They certainly did have some mercy on me, although they sometimes threatened to mark me as a warning, but Mrs. Knowlton never did, so we got along very well. My deportment was good when I was twelve, seventeen, eighteen and twenty-one years of age, but not during the rest of my ten years at South Boston as I had fourteen marks in all for disobedience, sauciness, neglecting my lessons and making myself disagreeable, etc. Twice I had only one mark in a year, and had five during the year that I cheated in the reading examinations, but never had so many again. Some of the girls were fortunate enough to escape a single mark while others had many more than I did because they did not care what they were doing all the time.

After my class finished grammar I had to review it during the spring quarter of my second year at South Boston, but that did not interfere with my studies, not even geography which was new to us then. Of course, I was not familiar with grammar for a long time and I am afraid I neglect it now sometimes as many people do.

Arithmetic was another enemy of mine, although I got along pretty well during the first year. It grew harder for me by degrees, and I wonder how I ever pulled myself through it without dropping behind the girls, but I know I did finish it at last after having had it five long and tedious years. I did not always understand the language of so many examples and was hours on only one as it seemed like a puzzle or conundrum to me. As I am not good in mathematics I had to

look my work over several times. I naturally worked slowly, and if I hurried I often made careless mistakes, so I had to have many extra hours in order that I might keep up with those intelligent and independent girls whom I envied in all our studies. Why, there was a time when I worked some where around forty extra hours in one quarter, and I was so discouraged. Misses Burnham and Badger kindly helped me along by asking me questions, but at the same time they tried to show me how to use my mind and be more independent. We girls were not supposed to help one another, but we did once in a while when we were about worn out. Once I was so far behind them that I could not spend Sunday with Mrs. Whiting. She never scolded me but simply said that Miss Bennett wrote a kind letter saying that I was a little behind the class. I worked on Saturday morning as usual, and was told to do more in the afternoon as a punishment and that I could have had the morning to myself, but it was too late when I knew it, so I must have had about four extra hours that day. That was not the first Saturday afternoon devoted to arithmetic, although I was not prevented from going to see Mrs. Whiting again, but allowed to go there every week for a while sometimes.

Another time I could not do an example, although I saw its answer in the book, but would not give it till I could explain and prove it, so I had to be at it from ten to one o'clock. Nothing was accomplished, so I had my dinner in the school building. I worked again at two o'clock, and because I could not answer one of Miss Badger's questions she sent me to bed for the rest of the day. I had my breakfast in my room, and I am glad to say I succeeded in finishing the example at eight o'clock after we had had prayers.

It was a great relief to me when I found that I did not stumble down in algebra and physics, but alas, I came pretty near it in geometry. The beginning of it was such a poor one that I asked Miss Bennett to let me give it up, but she said I could not do so and be an honest graduate on account of my diploma. So I had to make the best of it, and soon the worst of my struggles subsided after all my grieving for nothing. How is it that I never asked to drop arithmetic or anything else except geometry which was no worse than other studies? I was nineteen then, and rather old to be low-spirited, but I was that way whenever my lessons were discouraging. It was lucky I had the measles at Christmas time as I had to be absent from school for a few days, and when I did return I was not very strong for a long time for I would get tired easier than

usual. Now it seemed that I would never catch up with my class in geometry, but I did at last just before the Easter vacation commenced. Once I was so long trying to prove a problem that Miss Badger spoke of marking me for wasting time and falsehood if I kept giving her the wrong answer. That put me back because some people might have thought I meant to be so deceitful as to tell stories and that I was not worth trusting, not understanding my circumstances. I went to Miss Lilley for help, but she was unable to bring me to the point of the problem. Our marks were read in front of everybody on Friday nights and we always felt disgraced. When that day came nothing had been accomplished, so I had to suffer the consequence, although Miss Lilley tried to help me finish the work beforehand, but I hardly knew what to say so in that way I avoided getting marked for falsehood. She had already given me a serious talk as we had evening reading together, and I am not sorry for it when I think of its result, but I never liked to be spoken to about my faults. We were good friends, and she had such a sweet disposition that I could stand her scoldings better than from one I did not care for. Her spare time probably was limited, so when she suggested that we work together in geometry during evening reading I agreed with her, but said I did not want to do so on Friday night. On that day I asked her to excuse me from reading and she said she would, thinking I had work to do, but when she sent for me afterwards she asked me if I had an engagement, and I had to confess that I had none. She then said we would have reading that night, and I felt doomed as I wanted to be alone and out of sight.

In a short time I found myself winning geometry and gaining independence, so the obstacle had been overcome for good as I could understand the proofs of the problems better than I ever did. We girls wished to finish the study of circles before the end of the spring quarter, so we sometimes worked two hours a day. I had gotten over the grippe then, and was able to do everything and got along quite well in all my studies. We wanted to finish the course in geometry before Christmas of the next year before taking up physics, so we had two hours of it every day during the fall, and it was seldom that I needed an extra one which made a third one for me.

In reading class we read books that the teachers selected for us while in evening reading on certain nights we read what we got for our own pleasure, and on other nights we listened to the teachers. We deaf-blind pupils were alone



with any of the teachers most of the time, and sometimes with the other girls when they had silent reading. So any of us had a good chance to work extra at nights when we needed to if we did not have enough spare time during the day.

The rest of the mathematics was easy enough for me. Once I overslept and was late to algebra class, but when Miss Badger had wakened me and I got to class I had a good lesson for a wonder. She and Miss Lilley seemed much amused at my sleepiness, and instead of waiting till the hour was over the latter asked me for an excuse, although she knew the reason. I was not afraid of her but so embarrassed that I hardly knew what to say. I never liked to be tardy because sometimes the teachers threatened to mark me or told me to be more careful or asked questions if they thought my excuse a poor one.

Another time I felt so honored because I finished a problem before the girls did and was excused from class before the hour was over. They envied me I think from what Ida Cross said afterwards, although I do not remember of boasting about it, nor much of what passed between us, but they knew well how it was for me to keep up with them without extra work.

In physics we had so few and easy problems to prove, so much experimenting, examining, discussing, explaining and studying to do that I was even with the girls most of the time. One day Miss Lilley was charging a jar with electricity to show us how it produced lightning, and I happened to be the first one to put my finger on it. It scared me so much when I got struck by lightning that the girls did not care to try my experience. I groaned and stamped my foot, but in a few minutes I laughed at myself as the others did. It was not so much fun for me at first, but my appearance was so amusing to them all that Miss Lilley could not help laughing till she cried, and the girls felt glad they had not been in my place. I looked half angry and half scared, but then I knew something about thunder. I can feel it as it dashes along, and it is because two different clouds have met and clapped each other, but my sight is entirely gone, so I cannot see how frightful lightning looks. Miss Badger acted as if she was afraid of being struck too when she was showing me where the jar was, so in fun I accused her of being a sly fox, but she was no coward as she had already tried it herself. I was well prepared for it but did not realize how sharp it would be.

Latin grammar was another battle for me to fight, and I won it at last. It was when I was fifteen years of age, and in the fourth class, and having hard times in reading and arithmetic, so I had many enemies to deal with, although reading was the weakest one. My deportment was so poor at that time. Two classes had Latin together, so in that way I was able to keep up with them, and then too the beginning of our course was rather easy, but grew harder by degrees. Now because some of the girls were ill and others gave up the study I was the only one of my own class who went on with Katie Oniel and Carrie Cole during the next fall, but that only lasted till Christmas time as I did not get along well. Examination came and was an easy one, but I spent so much time in translating some sentences that I could not finish it at the end of the hour. Had I omitted them I probably would have received a high mark, but I did not realize how little time I had, so I had only thirty per cent. I was not aware of what would happen to me until I went to class next day and heard the corrections of our examinations. The next thing was that I found myself disgraced and turned out of class and put back into a lower one which fortunately was my own class, so my other studies were not interfered with. Miss Marrett was our teacher then and a good friend of mine, so it made me very miserable to be looked down on and thought hard of by everybody, but not many remarks were said to me. She told me to go to the house and think it over for the rest of the hour, so I did. Miss Badger seemed to be so ashamed of me, but later on she gave me to understand that not my examination counted only but my every day work also, and we think the review in the lower class proved a benefit to me because I did so well. I felt that there was very little sympathy from the teachers but they did not make me too uncomfortable after all. I am glad it occurred when I think of its good result. It would have been worse if I had dropped lower in everything and not graduated as soon as I did. The girls were so quick minded that they soon caught up to where I left off, but I do not remember just when they did. Poor Katie had to join us at Easter time as she got caught in the same trap that I did, and I knew how to sympathize with her and was comforted to think I was not the only guilty or block-headed person in the world. I think Carrie waited for us to catch up to her, but she was ill during the next year and was obliged to leave school for good. My class gradually decreased on account of illness and caring little for Latin till Katie and I were the only ones left, she belonging to a higher grade than I, and it was

during our third year's course. We finished Latin grammar, then translated some short stories and were ready for books, but to our joy it was thought best for us not to go on any further. There was one class ahead of us and another one behind us, and both of them translated books, but I think they were more intelligent than we were. Latin develops and trains the mind, helps one along in other studies, teaches one to be more accurate in English grammar and enables one to understand our own language as many of our words come from Latin. I had so much trouble with English grammar that I am sure Latin was an excellent teacher for me in spite of the enmity between us.

We had geography when we had reading, arithmetic and Latin, so I had my hands full, but it was the easiest and best thing I had, although it was rather hard for me at times on account of my short memory. Reading and outings made it so pleasant for me, but I was likely to forget some of the names of cities, towns, mountains, islands, rivers, lakes, their situations, and products, etc. We had geography a little more than three years on account of a general review, and it was then that I was more anxious to do my best.

### MY EXAMINATION.

My examinations were fair, had eighty-eight per cent on Sweden where my father and our sewing teacher, Miss Hanngren, came from. Ninety-three is the highest mark that I ever received, but I cannot think what our examination was about. Ninety-two comes next and that was in physics; had eighty-four twice in arithmetic, eighty-seven and a half in reviewing Latin; somewhere around that much—seventy, sixty and fifty in other studies; would probably have had a hundred in algebra if I had remembered a certain point of a problem before the limited hour expired.

On account of so many studies and limited time we left off having daily lessons in pencil writing soon after I went to South Boston, and wrote our examinations, compositions, school notes and letters to blind people in American Braille which is a point system made by punching paper according to fixed rules with a stylus. This system can be written rapidly, and it is a great convenience to be able to read what we and others have written, even our letters, and to study our notes and musical notations, although I was relieved of the latter on account of my condition. One day, at the age of eleven,



Miss Smith was writing in Braille in our pencil writing class, and when I inquired about it she showed me how to make some of the letters. When I went to see Mrs. Whiting I borrowed her slate which she bought for the purpose of writing to Edith Thomas and gave to me afterwards. With the aid of the key I wrote a letter to Miss Smith which I gave to her when I returned to Jamaica Plain on Monday morning. She then showed me how to change a small letter into a capital letter. As Braille writing was so new and interesting I enjoyed practicing it all summer and knew it better than I realized when I went to South Boston in the fall. Some of us girls happened to know a few of the Braille contractions, and when Miss Bennett found that we used them in class she forbade us to do so again in order that we might be good spellers, but when I came home for good I learned them all to save paper and time. I think I tried to learn New York Point at the kindergarten, but never mastered it until after I graduated when I had to read some books in that type. It was rather slow work, but now I can read it with ease, and also have learned English Braille.

We used Braille writers in algebra, geometry, physics and history, and found them very handy, but they are so expensive and get out of order so often that I never cared much for one of my own as long as my slate satisfied me despite its slow work. One day I had the latter with me when I happened to meet Mr. Wade at the library, and it attracted his attention, so he generously sent me a Braille writer which I gladly used until it failed to work well.

Mr. Wade was interested in deaf-blind people and did much for them as he was wealthy and knew something of affliction. In 1901 he wished us and our special teachers from different schools to be present at the Pan-American Fair and American Association Convention in Buffalo, New York, so he kindly paid all our expenses. We spent over a week at the school for the deaf, and met many teachers from various States who came to discuss the best methods of teaching speech to the deaf. I had the pleasure of meeting some of them again in Austin, Texas, the following year while my mother and I were visiting some deaf-blind pupils there on our way back to Boston.

At the Fair we had a pleasant time seeing how the natives of different cold and hot countries worked, lived and dressed, and then we rode on the camel, elephant, scenic railway cars, in a gondola and Japanese carriage, and made a real trip to Niagara Falls. I am glad I went, but I could have sacrificed

my pleasure there as I had always been contented to stay with my numerous friends and go short distances with them, and visit my homefolks occasionally.

We had a typewriter in Fisher cottage, and I was very anxious to learn how to use it, so finally I tried it, but never had enough practice with it as the other girls wanted it, too. It was so expensive that I would not ask Mr. Whiting for one of my own, so I begged my parents to get me one. They said they would if they could afford it, so I did not plead with them too much. At the age of eighteen Mrs. Whiting asked me what I wanted to buy with my money that had been given me for Christmas, and when I suggested that we buy a typewriter she was well pleased. I had already been at home in Throckmorton, Texas, for the summer, and while there a friend of ours kindly lent me his typewriter, which was a Remington, as I wanted it so badly. I learned where the letters were, and enjoyed writing to my friends. Of course I used only one finger instead of all of them, and had to hunt up the letters that I wanted. After I bought a writer, Miss Bennet allowed me to take a few lessons in the school building, and I was glad of them, although it seemed very awkward to me at first to use all of my fingers instead of only one. During my last two years at Perkins Institution I could spare time from my regular work to take lessons again, first from Miss Mason and then from Miss Sawyer. I practiced regularly and got along very well. My work was not perfect, and yet Miss Sawyer told the girls she was going to put "excellent" on my very last report and so she fulfilled her word. It amused me to think of it because I am not sure people mean what they say when they are praising my work or whatever it may be. In fact, I made no mistakes at times, and could place the figures evenly in the bills and orders. I had to memorize things to see how many words I could write in one minute, but I doubt if I could write more than fifty words, if that many, on account of my condition and short memory. Once in a while I wrote on the Smith, but never liked it as well as the Remington. Mine was a second-hand writer, and got out of order so many times that Mr. Whiting kindly bought me a bran-new one just before I graduated, and it has not given me much trouble so far, as the latest and best improvements had been made. Pencil writing is not too disagreeable for me, but such slow, bulky and tiresome work compared with that of Braille or typewriting. It must have been a great relief to my mother and sisters to read my typewritten letters as the Braille ones

may have hurt their eyes, but I should have written with pencil all the time until I bought a writer.

Some of the girls had watches, but I never asked for one because of the cost, and then, too, I was proud of my little clock. However, I received a watch as a Christmas gift at the age of seventeen, as my parents wished me to have one, because I carried my clock with me sometimes whether I needed it or not. They and other friends gave me some money when I was fourteen and Mr. Whiting added to it when he thought I was old enough to take proper care of a gold watch. It has done well except when it needed cleaning and a little fixing, but it is so expensive to keep it up that I do not use it now and do not miss it much. How much better it would have been if I had said frankly in time that I preferred a writer to anything else, but I was not thoughtful or sacrificing or brave enough then.

There is very little to say about physiology, botany and mythology except that they were interesting and that I could keep up with the girls pretty well, so I shall go on with other studies. English, Roman and Greek histories were more exciting than American because they were newer, original and had more of the details, too. The worst thing is that I never liked to take part in any of the classes nor in exhibitions nor in public for fear of making mistakes and disgracing myself. It was pleasanter to recite when I was alone with any teacher, but not to be called on before everybody. It was easier for me to remember and recite the details than to answer hard questions that puzzled me, even in examinations, such as what was the cause, effect, result, situation, condition, disadvantage, advantage and surrounding, etc., of certain things. Sometimes I did well in class, and then again I had to say, "I do not know," and the next girl would go on instead of me. I listened to everything that was said, and it comforted me whenever anyone was as dull as I. At present I enjoy reading history, geography and physiology better than to study them, as I am not very intelligent, although I want to know more of what is going on.

It seems that early English literature was easier for me than nineteenth century English and American literature, because I had it during my very last year at school and understood the language better except when it was too deep in thoughts and expressions. Of course the reading sometimes requires extra time for me, but that did not always annoy me if I was doing well; then, too, we had a change when we studied about the lives and work of different authors, and had a little of the

history as it is closely connected with literature. I do not know that I ever would have caught up with my class if Miss Marrett had not kindly allowed me to omit some of the unimportant poems after my recovery from the measles as I was having such a hard time with geometry then. The third year high school girls had early English literature with my class at first, but they needed to practice pencil writing for their graduation test, so I had it to myself for several months, and felt honored to be ahead of them until they caught up to me.

We had composition every day for one year and on Saturdays for one or two years in the lower grades. Now I needed more practice, so I had it alone three times a week with Miss Marrett in the second year high school when I was nineteen, and again for several months of the next year; then came our test. Ida Cross and Nellie Smith did not have much of it, but we all together practiced pencil writing for a little while. It was easy work, but they dreaded the spelling while I feared that my composition might not be a good one. Finally the appointed day arrived in May and Miss Bennett delivered our test which was a story about Benjamin Franklin spending too much money for a worthless whistle. I was not obliged to spell anything from the newspaper, but I wanted to follow my class in everything, so I was dictated to. After it was over I thought I spelled *oppertunity* instead of *opportunity* while writing the story, and it was the only special mistake that I made, so I easily passed in the test after all my worrying about it. I knew how to spell that word but was so careless and excited that I did not realize what I was doing.

### MY STRUGGLES LESSEN.

My struggles began to lessen very much when I was in the ninth grade, as I had finished arithmetic and taken up algebra, physiology and still had Latin and reading for the last time, and doing so well that I had quite a good many free hours to myself. I worked extra on Saturdays with my regular teachers that year and so on until I graduated, and so in that way they knew just how much I had learned during the week, and they also helped me along. That idea pleased me well for I liked them and wanted to be with them as much as possible. I did see them in my classes, but not as much as in evening reading or wherever we happened to be. Miss Badger seldom was with me on Saturdays since we went to South Boston, and yet I was with my class in composition and



pencil writing sometimes. While the girls had spelling I did arithmetic or memorized poems and hymns or wrote in my way what had been dictated to me, but I was not with them much during my last years at Perkins Institution as new arrangements mentioned previously had been made. Miss Burnham must have had her hands full with us all, and she also had me do arithmetic on other days when she had a class if I had a free hour and she could spare time to give me a little help. She also was alone with me many hours and I am glad her time was not wasted after all, and that I succeeded in finishing with my class, but had it not been for this extra help I surely would have dropped into a lower class. Miss Badger used her spare time very freely for my sake, but she had to help me so much in all my studies and needed as much pleasure as anybody else, so Miss Burnham would not let her overdo herself in arithmetic. There were other regular teachers besides Miss Lilley, who willingly relieved Miss Badger of her tasks besides our Saturday lessons together, but not as frequently as Miss Burnham, so I fear she was too sacrificing for my good. They not only used evening reading to help me along, but also part of the morning or afternoon, so my debts are very heavy when I think of their kindness and friendliness. There were times when I worked by myself in most of my studies, so I feel that I did my part as well as they although they were with me most of the time. I must have been a great nuisance to them all, especially Misses Burnham and Badger, but still they would have much to do with me.

The latter failed in health when I was nearly eighteen years of age, and was obliged to have an extra vacation which commenced in May, so Miss Bixby came to take charge of some of the lower grades. Sometimes I could be with my class and other times I was alone with my regular teachers, and had an easy time in algebra, physiology and Latin. Reading did not always agree with me on account of the language, so I only barely caught up with the girls on the last day of school. "The Vicar of Wakefield" was not interesting to me in certain parts, and then, too, I did not understand everything and needed much explanation. Of course my struggles lessened in high school because I had fewer studies then and a clearer head also, except once in a while.

In gymnastics Miss Badger gave me the first letter of every word as the teacher gave orders, and she also tapped on my shoulder when she wanted me to repeat the exercises. I rather liked to exercise, as I did not tire as easily as some of the girls did, but I liked games and dancing better. I can-



not hear or see and yet I had no difficulty in keeping step with my leader in marching or dancing after I had learned to follow her movements, but in running fast we were likely to get out of step. The trouble was that I could not stand long on one foot nor on both toes as the spinal meningitis weakened my power of balance, but I am thankful that I am neither crippled nor deformed in any way. My feet and ankles have never developed, so I had them massaged, and I wore steel plates until they broke and wore out my shoes so badly after I came home for good. I do not know but it seems that they prevented my feet from aching when I took long walks, because they ached once when I went without plates. They seldom ache now without anything to support them, as we do not go walking very much on account of our work, and then, too, perhaps the country roads may be a little bit better than paved sidewalks. They simply are weak and flat, and sometimes I sprained them a little, pretty seriously when I was going down stairs after my recovery from the measles. I used to be rather hard to lead when I was young, but not as I grew older and could climb steep and rocky hills without much assistance after I became accustomed to them, but now I fear I lack a little practice at home when I am crossing a creek or branch. Mr. Wade gave me to understand that Helen Keller was not a very steady walker either, as she had the same trouble and illness that I did, so the power of balance must be connected with our sense of hearing and sight from what he said. My muscles at the waist do not seem to be very strong either, and while I was ill they were so weak in my neck that my head would fall on my bosom, so plasters were put in to hold it up and also around my ankles. I am so heavy and short of breath that it was difficult for me to pull myself up well on the bars, vertical ropes and to swing all the way on the flying rings and to run for a long time, although I am strong enough to lift heavy people or things.

Wood-sloyd is what I took when I first went to South Boston and I got along pretty well most of the time, but I do wish I had accomplished much more work than I did. It trains the pupils to use their hands well, but I was so young and stupid that I could not seem to realize its good then. Sometimes I spoiled my model and had it to do over again to my sorrow. I made a wedge, flower-stick, box, tool rack, plant rack, cutting board to be used for bread or cake and perhaps more things that are not clear in my memory.

We also had mechanical drawing lessons, and drew the outline of what we were to make in wood-sloyd from a model.

That kind of work was a good preparation for drafting patterns for garments which we learned later to make, and for the drawing in the geometry class.

On account of my extra literary work I could not devote as much of my spare time to drawing as I wanted to, and yet I did finish the regular course to my joy. At first we, with Miss Hanngren's aid, made articles by hand, and after we had learned machine-stitching she gave orders and taught us to be independent, accurate and particular in drafting patterns, cutting and making up our garments. Sometimes it was discouraging when we had to take out our machine-stitching and then again we had good luck with it. We had to pay for the material, so I put my mind on the work, but once I carelessly forgot something and had to do the cutting over again as I spoiled the cloth. Miss Badger seldom was with me during my typewriting hours or in any of the manual training classes except when I needed her in the wood-sloyd or mechanical drawing or to help me draft my patterns and cut the garments. It would give me much pleasure now to make them, but have nothing to draft with, and tissue patterns are too thin for me, and then, too, the styles are so changeable. Mamma has to use the machine so much that she thinks she had just as well do the sewing as not, because she is a fast worker, but I do the mending, darning, some fancy work and house work. I used to anticipate sewing class and I think Miss Hanngren was amused because she could not always make me get up right off at the end of the hour when I wanted to finish something.

Once one of the girls came in very late and I do not remember just what I said when I noticed it, but after class was over she told me that she forgot her duty and that Miss Hanngren was going to mark her for tardiness. I do not know why, but the latter decided to excuse her after all, perhaps because it was so amusing to us girls. Now I must confess that I did the very same thing myself afterwards. I forgot what day it was, and had a nice walk in the yard with Nellie Smith during the four o'clock hour, thinking I was at leisure. It dawned on me at five o'clock while Miss Langworthy was fixing my knitting or crocheting, and I took hold of her dress and shouted "What will Miss Hanngren say? I forgot to go to her at four o'clock." Everybody must have laughed at me as Miss Langworthy did, and she said she thought I could live through it and so I did. Next morning Miss Hanngren was keeping recess with us in the yard, so I braced up courage to speak to her for fear she might be the first one to say something about

it to me. I certainly did dread it, but we were very good friends, so she kindly forgave me.

Crocheting was harder for me than knitting on account of so much practice and also because I could not hold the hook in the proper way and had to pick up the stitches with my fingers. I was afraid that Miss Langworthy would speak of this, so I worked under the machine in front of me, and she had to take my hands out where she could see what I was doing. She was so patient that I soon overcame the obstacle. The hardest thing I ever made was a sweater, because I did not understand its pattern in advance and made mistakes, but she was so ready to do anything for us that she seldom made any complaints. I knew how to fix the work if it was easy and did so sometimes and also for the girls, but my time seemed too valuable to be wasted when I wanted to progress, so I usually depended on the teacher as she could do it quicker than I. Edith Thomas and I used to sit at the same window, and if we were inclined to talk too much to each other Miss Langworthy would tell us in a nice way to stop, and for me to put my mind on my work. If we hemmed napkins we had a race and once she had to tell me not to be in such a hurry and that she preferred my sewing to be very good. My mother was disappointed because some of my old patterns were too plain, so after I left school I, with the aid of my books, learned a number of new and pretty ones which pleased her well. I fear I was not as industrious outside of class as I might have been, so I did not make as many things as I intended to, because I was too slow and fond of a good time for a change.

Basket lessons were not given, but I was anxious for them, so Miss Hoxie kindly gave them to me during the fall and winter of my last year at Perkins Institution, and we had a pleasant time together. Of course I lacked practice and independence, so after I graduated I borrowed a book and by degrees I succeeded in improving my work. That is the truth from experience and what people say, but nothing is excellent yet.

Now, at the kindergarten we did nothing but make our beds. We would hustle with them, and yet be particular about them, but it took me so long to make mine when we changed sheets. The Misses Poulsson had me do the same work and once in a great while they also had me dry dishes in Fayville, but Mrs. Whiting had two maids at times, so I did almost nothing till I was a little older. At South Boston I dried the supper dishes and envied the one who washed them because she got through first, and I wanted as much time to myself as

she did. That was during my first year there and I was so happy when Mrs. Knowlton let me wash the dinner dishes the next year. Later on at different times I washed the breakfast and kitchen dishes, the latter of which were so greasy that I was glad to get out of them whenever I had a chance, although I did not have to wash the cooking vessels as I do now. Mrs. Knowlton was going to give me the last job mentioned above during my last year at school when I said meekly that I did them before, not expecting to be relieved of them. We girls would have a race with any of the dishes or chatter away at a great rate or tease one another and then again we had to be reminded of quietness, cleanliness, carefulness and the like in any kind of work.

Many times we were lazy in getting up or slow about certain things or played too much that we were late to breakfast or prayers unless we narrowly escaped tardiness or managed to do our work and get ready for school in a very short time as we had to be in class from eight o'clock to quarter past seven on certain days, with the exception of quite a good many long and short recesses for meals, walking, and pleasure. I had a watch but was likely to over-sleep, so my room-mate often had to wake me if she heard the bell. When I roomed alone Miss Burnham kindly offered to call me up for one year, but not the next year and I did not expect it of her, either, so I asked some girl to let me know when to get up. Once there was a misunderstanding between us or perhaps she did not care to take the trouble of waking me, or thought my nearest neighbor would do so just as well as not, but the latter was a new pupil then and I preferred an older one. In fact, I doubt if the former cared as much for me as most people did or as much as I did for her, because at times she was contrary or distant, and would make excuses for not wanting my company and also for not coming to me when I called her and yet there never was any serious trouble between us. Now because she neglected me I never woke once till that new girl shook me at breakfast time. It provoked me so much that I accused that friend of not waking me at my request, and yet I did not feel bitterly toward her. It seems that she said she did not have to do so at my bidding, and to think I was so willing to do things for her on my own accord or when she asked me to do her a favor.

Ida Cross was my first and last room-mate, but not all the time through. When she arrived and after I had been introduced to her she said she hoped she was not cross, but I fear she was just a little bit so when she was tired or not well, and



yet she was a dear girl when she was in a good mood. My last name is Robin, but I am afraid that I was much more to blame for everything than many people or robins are, as we all have our faults and nobody is perfect. I think I helped Ida with the sweeping and dusting in our room during my first year at South Boston, but it was not until after Easter vacation that I did the scrubbing as she was unable to return to school for several days on account of illness. Of course I felt that I had so much to do then, but now I am still strong and willing to do as much work as I can. When I was young I was inclined to be rather lazy and greedy for more pleasure, but as I grew older I realized what the importance of cleanliness was and how much people were doing for me. Our rooms were supposed to be washed every other Saturday and we took turns in scrubbing them, but sometimes we neglected to do so, and I fear our matron did not always know it. However, we got out of it when the floors were oiled.

There were so many of us in the girls' and boys' departments that we could put only a few things in the laundry. Now at the age of twelve I had such a bad cold that Miss Badger had to show me how to wash my numerous handkerchiefs, and I was sitting at my lowest bureau drawer when she came and said that they would not dry as I had them all in one pile on the towel rack, but I was too lazy to rise, so poor Ida kindly arranged them for me. Afterwards I learned to wash them and other extra things alone, and so I became more independent and vigorous. Mrs. Whiting's maid often did them up for me, as I was told to bring them home with me, but sometimes Miss Badger did the work unless I could relieve her of the task. They became more numerous than usual when Mrs. Whiting was taken ill and died, and I even washed my gymnastic suit, but I was older then and did not mind the job. When it came to ironing some one had to do it or help me with it or I did it myself on the hot pipes or radiator.

Mrs. Knowlton was so good-natured that it was easy enough for me to give in to her, help her with the work and run on errands for her. I am afraid I broke too many dishes, besides a pitcher, window light and door glass, through carelessness, accident and forgetfulness, and would have paid for them all, but she would not let me buy more than a new pitcher. She was more forgiving than ready to punish us severely when we broke any of the rules or disobeyed her or neglected to do our duties. She certainly did control herself, let us have some pleasure and freedom, so we could bear her



refusals and scoldings very well if we behaved ourselves and did the work well.

I lived on the lower floor until I was seventeen years of age and because Miss Badger caught me talking to my room-mate after bed-time I was put on the upper floor. She was passing by with a candle and of course the light flashed in as our door was not well closed. We were sorry to be separated, but I fear I did not mind it very much as I had a better room-mate than my former one and among more girls than she was. I do not know that she thought hard of me for we were together just the same when we could, but she said that the ladies simply wanted to give me a treat, and that she really did not want to talk to me when she was tired. Perhaps that may be true from what she used to say at times, but she would not make many complaints and seemed as if she wanted as much fun as I did. She usually warned me if there was any danger of any one catching us, but that night it was too late, and it would not have looked well if we had shown any signs of cowardice. I happened to be in bed then, but she was not. When I was asked if we had talked many times I replied that we had, so we were not scolded very much for telling the truth.

Our punishment during the rest of the winter-quarter was that we were not allowed to sit up on Saturday nights, nor go to lectures, parties and entertainments. The lectures usually were too long and dry for me because I do not like to sit still and listen so attentively, not even in church unless the subject is interesting and I am awake, so I was glad to get out of them, but disappointed not to go elsewhere.

My room-mate was kind, helpful, industrious, lively and pleasant, but considered untruthful, dishonest, impudent and disobedient at times by some of the people. I know she did wrong once in awhile, but she denied some things in such a way and treated me so well that I hope she was not as mean as they thought she was. She was very poor, so I did little things for her on my own accord, and also shared my pleasure with her. One day we were playing a game that required us to answer questions truthfully, and I was asked which room-mate I liked better, my former one or the new one. It was so embarrassing to speak out right in front of them that I declared I did not know, but in fact, I think I cared more for the latter. We knew each other at Jamaica Plain, and she was more thought of by everybody as she had a good character, and was the same girl all the time, even after she left school and came to make us a visit at my request. She and some of

the girls made remarks of my old room-mate to me as if they did not think she had enough good qualities, and yet they were friendly most of the time.

Why, I never talked to them half as much as to the latter after bed-time, but still I could not be very strict about the rule once in awhile when I wanted some fun until I was a nine o'clock girl; then I considered it late enough as everything was quiet unless we got excited, which was seldom. I think Mrs. Knowlton had me room alone during my last two years at school to prevent me from getting into mischief, because she asked Ida Cross a question previously which I do not know about, and then sent me to bed at quarter past seven for the rest of the spring quarter, saying I was not well after the grippe. She came once to see if I had obeyed her and everything happened to be all right then, but I fear she did not always know that at times some of us bad girls read or wrote or studied school notes or mended things or did fancy work or whatever we had a mind to do. I was a nine o'clock girl then and in good health, but Ida would not tell me the reason, only that she did not answer Mrs. Knowlton's question more than was necessary. We got along so well that I cannot think what I could have done unless it is that I was a little bit tardy to bed unawares once in a while, but we hardly ever talked for pleasure after nine o'clock. It may be also because I was so hard to wake up sometimes or too lazy to rise in time, and did not always do enough of our room work. Of course I was willing to work, but I was either too slow about it or too long in primping for the day, and then, too, I did the breakfast dishes, so Ida would not always let me help her much. It is true that I was falling rapidly in weight on account of the grippe and measles, but I had gotten back my strength when I was sent to bed so early. When Mrs. Whiting died in another year, Miss Badger sent me to bed at quarter past seven for the rest of the winter-quarter, when there was absolutely no need of it, as I was so well and doing my best in my studies, but I was worrying more about my vacations than about my guardians—mourning for my friend. My weight fell again but rose during the summer; then lessened the next year, and yet I was allowed to sit up late most of the time.

I wondered many times where I should spend my very last summer in the North, as I could not carry out my own plans and feared I might be among strangers or people I did not love, but I was surprised when I found out that I was to board with Mrs. Locke, the mother of one of our new teachers, whom I did not know very well. The former and her three daugh-

ters made me so happy that I would not have missed the good times we all together had in Hampton, New Hampshire, for a great deal. I had been leading a city life with older people since Mr. Whiting sold his Hingham farm, when I was thirteen years of age, so it was considered a good plan for me to be in the country with young girls who did their own house work, besides entertaining company, going calling, berrying, to church, Sunday School, parties, on picnics and in bathing.

The Easter holidays immediately after Mrs. Whiting's death I spent partly at school and partly in Cambridge with Mrs. Lewis, who used to teach at South Boston, and the next two short vacations of my last year at Perkins Institution, Margaret McKenzie, a school-mate, and I spent in Cotuit, Massachusetts with Captain and Mrs. Crosby. The latter used to live in South Boston, and was for a time my Sunday School teacher. I was so anxious to go somewhere that I felt pleased to be cordially invited. As there was no snow on the ground in Cotuit we had a pleasant time working, walking, driving and on the boat. One of the interesting things was a twelve-mile drive in all the cold to Hyannis, where Mr. Whiting used to visit the Baker family when a boy. Nobody was at home then, so we walked on the veranda of their house, and under the trees where I picked up a horse-chestnut which touched Mr. Whiting very much when I gave it to him.

Miss Badger lived in Worcester, Massachusetts, for a while and then moved to Sunapee Harbor, New Hampshire. She very kindly had me spend a few days with her several times in both places, and as usual we enjoyed our outings in the woods and on the cars and boat. Elsie Paine, a school-mate of mine, was with us during my last visit with Miss Badger, and when we returned to Mrs. Whiting's house I went to East Bridgewater with the former. While there we had a pleasant time calling on Nellie Smith, one of my class-mates, and some friends and relatives of Elsie's. Miss Smith lived in Swampscott, Massachusetts, and of course we visited each other sometimes and she also took me somewhere once in a while at the kindergarten, but not as frequently as my other special teachers as her stay at school was shorter than theirs.

Now on account of my falling in weight during the spring quarter of my last year at Perkins Institution I was asked to give up typewriting lessons, and take raw eggs for a while, and so I had more spare time to myself. I rather tired then, but nothing hurt me as long as I could hold out and enjoy myself.

## ENDING MY SCHOOL LIFE—GRADUATION.

This nearly completes the story of my school life. Our graduation, which we had been looking forward to with dread and pleasure, finally took place at the Boston theater on the fifth of June, 1906. We recited in physics about energy and its work, Miss Badger interpreting for me as she usually did in public. I stitched on the machine to show how muscular energy was applied to its treadles; then I connected the wheel with a little motor by a belt to show how electricity can be turned into energy. All the different exercises went off well, and it was such a beautiful warm day that many of our friends and relatives were present, among whom were my mother, Mr. Whiting, Mrs. Hadley and others. We felt that we had worked so hard that we all deserved our diplomas since we had satisfactorily finished the school course.

We regret that Mr. Anagnos was not with us then, as he had gone abroad, and how little we thought of his absence forever. His death was a great blow to people and a mild surprise to me, but we are thankful that he died among his friends and relatives, and that we have a very good superintendent in his place. The former had done so much for people and different schools that he was missed greatly by everybody. His early life was such a toilsome one that he grew up to be a very good, thoughtful and intelligent man, and had a fine character. I realize now that he meant to set a good example on the pupils for their benefit when they went out into the world, and that he was none too hard on me by not letting me have too much pleasure, but also spoiled me a little bit, because I regret that I did not stay at the Institution more than I did in order that I might have saved expense, trouble and improved my character as I have learned many valuable lessons since I left Boston.

He was the one who kindly invited my mother to stay with us at school as a guest until it closed on the twenty-seventh of June, with the exception of a few days which she spent at Cotuit. We did our best to entertain her, but she was so anxious about the home-folks, as she had left Bonnie with all the work to do and the care of little Helen, who had the whooping cough. Mamma is lively and likes to go about and have a good time, but I fear I urged her to go when she was too tired; for the bustle of the great city was fatiguing to one who lived in a small and quiet town.



On the day after graduation Ida Cross, Nellie Smith and I had the pleasure of joining the Alumnae Association and attending the different sessions during the day. Of course mamma and quite a good many friends and former graduates were present, so we had a pleasant time. It is the duty of the Association to do what they can in the way of helping and teaching the sick and unfortunate blind people, prevent blindness as much as possible, and find out what is the best way of being independent, cheerful and self-supporting, etc. Some of the members are as fortunate as to be present every year while I regret that I have been absent all this time.

I wanted to entertain company, go visiting frequently and on picnics, so all the weeks of the last quarter at the Institution were very busy ones as I had to continue with my studying and rehearse for our graduation. When school closed mamma and I spent a few pleasant days with Mrs. Locke and her daughters, but we could not go anywhere else as mother was anxious to be at home, so we started for Texas on the thirtieth of June.

Mr. Whiting, Miss Bennett, Mrs. Hadley and her little girl, Mrs. Davidson, Ida Cross and other friends saw us off at the station, and I realized then that I might never see some of them again, and it is so now, but I am in hopes that I may see the others before long, as they are numerous. Of course I was glad that school days were over, and that I was coming home, but at the same time I felt badly to think of leaving everybody at Perkins Institution and other places. When Mr. Whiting saw us safely on the train I could see that it went very hard with him, and now he is gone forever.

We expected to reach Albany, Texas, on the third day of July, but the cars did not connect well, so we were one day later. I did not mind traveling much and then, too, we had cool weather, but both of us wanted to see our folks the first thing. My father and little Lawrence also had to wait for us in Albany, and when we did arrive at last we lost no time, but drove a distance of forty miles in the wagon and reached home early in the morning of the fifth day of July. My sisters and brothers were roused from sleep by the rumble of wheels. We found them all doing very well, and Isola, who had been married nearly a year to Frank Stribling, was there, too, to greet us.

I was not feeling very strong then, but so happy that I did not think much of myself until typhoid fever developed in August, while I was visiting Isola and had to be brought home on a mattress in a hack. It was like a siege for a month and a



harder one than the measles, but I gained victory at last. I think Mr. Whiting was able to pay all the expense, but somehow it seems that he influenced the doctor, nurse and painters to do the work as a kindness. Now, I doubt if any one could have done more for me than my mother did. She had to do the work, tend to the children and wait on me until Bonnie came home from a visit. Southerners have such large families that they are experienced workers and nurses. They are so hospitable and ready to lend a hand to any one who is ill or in trouble of any kind. We did not impose on any of them, nor use our influence over them, and yet some of them and our physician waited on me as a kindness, and helped mamma with the work once in a while. I realized how much she had to do, so I would not let her overdo herself when I was in a good mood. It might have been worse if I could have seen and heard everything, but on account of my condition it was only at times that I was annoyed or out of my head.

Times have changed at home as well as in the North. Bonnie was married to John McCulloch in December, 1908, and lived close to us for a while and then moved on a farm six miles from town. They have two girls and one boy, while Isola, who lives on a farm fifteen miles' distant, has two boys. We all visit one another once in a while, and have very busy and pleasant times. We live in the town most of the time, but have a farm two miles away where we all go for a while sometimes. The men are always there during the planting and harvesting seasons.

They raise cattle, horses, hogs, chickens, turkeys, guineas, cotton, wheat, oats, feed and vegetables, and would have good luck every year if it would only rain more or less, be a little warmer in winter, the insects be less troublesome, and if no death occurred among the animals, but as it is the crops fail once in a while.

I was so used to house-keeping in the North that I found everything different and rather hard at home, so I did not do very much work by myself till Bonnie married. Now I make the beds, wash and dry dishes, clear off and set table, sweep and dust several rooms, turn the washing machine, draw water and churn. The school floors were so smooth that we girls could sweep them easier and quicker with a hair brush than I can with an ordinary broom. Our floors are so splintery that I do not always get all the dirt, so I dust them when I am through with the sweeping.

Some of my folks are Baptists, so I naturally wished to be one too, and went to that Church sometimes at South Boston,

although I usually went to the Congregational Church of which Miss Badger is a member. During my first year at home I read the Bible, part of which was familiar to me, and in July, 1907, I joined the Baptist Church.

I am constantly watching and hearing of grown up people and children reading, working and experiencing so much that I realize what life is, and that I was a spoiled and contrary girl. I knew beforehand that there were so many of us in the family, and that I could not have as many things as in the North, but I believed in economy and was well prepared for it, although I still crave for friendship and pleasure. Mr. and Mrs. Whiting taught me to depend on them in the North, but I never felt that I needed their help after I came home, because I am with my folks, who try to lead virtuous and industrious lives. My friends have done so much for me that I am sorry I have done so little for them, and think I might have helped them to an extent if I had only been more considerate, sacrificing and less extravagant, but at any rate I hope they may find me somewhat changed in character if I ever return to Boston.

The End.













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